

A VENUE



ISSUE ONE
(ALWAYS) FREE



Who We Are

We aim to provoke, educate and inspire

We support community organisation and direct action.

We believe in solidarity, justice, equality and freedom.

We believe that ethnicity, gender, ability, sexuality and age are not legitimate determinants of value and worth.

We oppose all forms of hierarchy.

We oppose political parties and bureaucracies.

We seek input from our readers.

The Unnamed Collective

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Other activist groups in Western Australia include

Deaths In Custody Watch Committee
www.deathsincustody.org.au

Refugee Rights Action Network
www.rran.org

Forest Rescue
www.forestrescue.com.au

Industrial Workers of the World
www.iww.org.au

Sea Shepherd
www.seashepherd.org/australia

Ban Uranium Mining Permanently
ufc@ccwa.org.au

Occupy Perth
www.occupyperth.org

If you know of others, please let us know.

We acknowledge the Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate and we support Aboriginal people's struggle for self-determination.

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Inside front cover — Citrus Knightshade
Inside back cover — Citrus Knightshade
Back cover — Park Bear 'Glorious Anarchy'

Punitive Policies Extended in the Territory

Who is responsible for ensuring children attend school? Is it parents' responsibility to have their children attend school every day? Or should the education system take some responsibility to encourage school attendance by meeting at the very least, the language and cultural needs of its students? This issue is something of a hot potato in Australia, pitched back and forth in public discourse between parents and teachers. Except in the Northern Territory, where blame is placed squarely on those who are most marginalised.

The question of the education system's role in school attendance seems of little concern to the Federal Government when it comes to Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory. Instead, it appears they are working on the assumption that it is parents who are 100% responsible for their children's school attendance, even though there are not enough skilled teachers in Northern Territory schools, classrooms are not bi-lingual and there is little or no recognition of Aboriginal culture. Blame for this substandard system is transferred via the Government's imposition of welfare quarantining — withholding welfare payments from people if their children do not attend school, even if the parents are single, unemployed and disabled.

In its latest incarnation, this scheme is known as 'The Improving School Enrolment and Attendance (through Welfare Reform) Measure' (SEAM) and it is just one part of the many coercive and unconscionable measures that have been undertaken under the banner of the Northern Territory Emergency Response Intervention, first rolled out in 2007. The latest twist in this tale, is that even though these measures have been incredibly damaging, not to mention completely unsuccessful in reducing truancy, SEAM is about to be extended further across NT Aboriginal communities, beyond its initial pilot area. A benchmark for attendance will be set by the State and there will be 'counselling' of families by truancy 'support' workers who will push for compliance. If students' attendance does not meet the benchmark, their families' income support payments will be suspended for three months.

So, how will these families afford to live, especially considering that the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) was scrapped under the Howard Government at the outset of the Intervention and there are

insufficient employment opportunities in remote areas. Given all of this, it is clear that SEAM will only deepen and prolong poverty, and fail to address any of the root causes of truancy. Considering that the Northern Territory Intervention claims to tackle Aboriginal children's health and wellbeing, how is it possible that placing the coercive and impoverishing burden of welfare quarantining upon children and their parents can benefit anyone?

As with every aspect of the NT Intervention, there has been a complete lack of appropriate consultation with the communities who are affected by its measures. The bottom line for anyone doing anything at all that relates to Aboriginal people is appropriate consultation with the community and then collaboration in design and delivery of programs. According to numerous Aboriginal leaders from the NT, from the very outset, the Intervention's consultation process has been paternalistic, as have been many of its internal evaluations.

Even if there was any ethical justification for carrying out the Intervention in the way that it has been done, there is still a complete lack of evidence that its measures to improve children's health have been even faintly successful. Nor is there the evidence that children of welfare recipients in remote Aboriginal communities are more likely to truant than the children of people in paid work. As such, it can only be concluded that SEAM is based solely on ideology: a baseless and savage myth which holds that truancy should specifically be blamed on failed parenting by Aboriginal people who are experiencing disadvantage. It is victim blaming at its starkest. If we in Australia are serious about living in a fair society which meets all peoples' needs, such myths must be exposed, and their related policies instantly withdrawn in favour of programs that have consultation and collaboration with their participants fundamental to every step of their research, design and implementation.

Michelle Braunstein

More information on the Northern Territory Intervention can be found at: <http://tracker.org.au>
<http://www.crikey.com.au> - <http://www.antar.org.au>
<http://stoptheintervention.org> - <http://www.vinnies.org.au>



End of Occupy?

Today was the official end of Occupy Sydney. After 110 days of occupying the space in front of the Reserve Bank of Australia, the right-wing tabloid Daily Telegraph of 2 February, said that the occupation was “finally over” after three women and two men were arrested, and after others were moved on from the city centre. “We will not be closed down — as one is arrested more will appear,” one protester was quoted as saying. “Police from NSW are trampling our human rights — our right to protest.”

For this activist, Occupy has been an amazing experience. It’s important not to get carried away. Occupy Sydney and similar actions in other Australian cities are not Occupy London, or Occupy New York. A “riot” in central Athens or Santiago is a very different matter to the Aboriginal Tent Embassy “riot” in Canberra where Julia Gillard lost her shoe. But it does show an extraordinary level of activism for Australia, something that happens perhaps once a decade.

The Sydney experience involved six to eighty people sleeping overnight at Martin Place, for over three months. During that time, there was usually one meeting a day, whether a General Assembly or one of the various working groups. At least once every two weeks, there would be a Free School, with talks on everything from protesters’ legal rights to contemporary economics. Some of this was dominated at first by the various organised socialist groups in Sydney, but at some point the organised socialist groups decided to withdraw: Occupy was then composed mainly of individuals who were unaffiliated with any political group, or attending a protest for the first time. There were also eccentric individuals such as those from the so-called Common Law Party, or others from Zeitgeist, whose policies I still don’t quite understand.

For me, Occupy Sydney raised interesting questions about the role of the “working class”. At the risk of sounding like a tabloid newspaper, not many of those who camped out were “workers”. Working forty hours a week is not normally compatible with the late nights, early morning police harassment and the windy environment of a Martin Place occupation. Many of those who became the familiar

faces of Occupy were students, or those working part time and casually, or the homeless. Never before have I seen an Australian event where homeless people sleeping in Martin Place suddenly found a voice at a political event in Sydney. An honourable mention must go to the “squatting community”. Banner drops on anti-capitalist themes occurred at about a dozen buildings in the central business district throughout this time. These people — squatting themselves — were one of the mainstays behind Occupy Sydney.

If an honourable mention goes to the squatters, then a “dishonourable mention” goes to the police. Who am I kidding? The police were not “dishonourable” and did not “abuse” their powers — harassing people is their job. The police harassment at Occupy had involved legal proceedings against seventy people — at least. The initial approach was to go in hard and fast, and at least two violent police raids in October must have frightened the police. Complete with riot gear and the Public Order and Riot Squad, the tactic of using overwhelming police force failed. People were arrested and belongings were seized, but there was organised resistance. Following previous protests from Australia and elsewhere, protesters linked arms and formed defensive positions to resist police. Some fought the police when police attempted to seize sofas and other belongings. The threat of a full-scale “real” riot literally made the police back off. Those who were arrested simply came back the next night. Those who were given police bail conditions prohibiting them from returning to Martin Place (or within one hundred metres, two hundred metres or two kilometres) simply had them removed when they were challenged in Court.

The failure of using overwhelming force led to a period during November of petty harassment. This involved police suddenly showing up and walking through the Occupy site, asking people inane questions (“where did you get this box?”) to “warning” people not to get into sleeping bags. The police also thought that earlier morning calls — police sirens — was a way of tiring people so that they would leave the site. What the police didn’t quite realise is that this low-level police harassment actually acted as a training ground for the Occupiers. Each time two cops came through the camp, someone would shout out and people would casually wander over to see what was going on. After days and weeks of this, people became more disciplined, so that any shout of a police presence would be met by a rapid mobilisation of people almost surrounding the cops involved. Rather than new police being tested out on protesters in public order situations, it was new protesters who were using the taxpayer-funded cops as a training exercise.

Police seemed to tire of this approach and then focused on the policy of relentlessly enforcing local council regulations. The new police arsenal consisted of bringing legal actions for “staying overnight” or “camping” or using the law of “trespass”. Police have adopted the issuing of penalty notices for these offences, but also arresting people, taking them to a police station, charging them, and giving bail conditions such as not to return to Martin Place. The exact lawfulness of some of these actions is unclear. The police approach very much had the feel of

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LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS



The Serco Group was founded by Doctor Phineas Serco, an alien super-villain who tried to take over Earth in 1972 with giant laser-eyed spider-robots. Serving time in the UN’s moon prison, he studied the principles of free-market economics, realising the best way to control governments is to control government services. He will not rest until every human being is his devoted casual employee or sub-contractor with a valid ABN.



Occupy *(from page 5)*

police simply wanting to “clear” Martin Place and hunting around for any law to do so. Given the gap between when the police bring charges and when they turn up at court, there is currently a glut of matters going through the courts from matters which occurred weeks or months ago. Bail conditions imposed by the police have been overturned. A trespass charge — taking cover under an awning to keep out of the rain — has been dismissed by the Court. A High Court challenge to some of the offences — in coordination with Melbourne’s Occupy — is yet to be heard.

An interesting observation of Occupy is to compare the people who are now occupying with those who occupied in the early weeks. Many of the faces have changed. I have in mind one activist who, after many weeks of sleeping out, police harassment and rain, developed a chest problem and just got generally burnt out. He is currently giving support from afar, but giving the occupation itself a rest. In his place, there are others who were not involved at first, but have now made the occupation a major priority in their lives.

My own (minor) role in Occupy has included legal support. As a semi-employed lawyer currently doing further study, it is disappointing that we have received so little support from solicitors. Some with their own firms (and who say they are on our side) love to hand out their business cards but have provided zero support (unless paid for). We will remember your names. Community Law Centres have been little better, and offer little support (as opposed to Melbourne, where they have made a real contribution). This is a great shame, but should not be a surprise. There is plenty of anecdotal and academic evidence to show that the personal values of lawyers are very pro-establishment, including those who like to present themselves as radicals.

Although yesterday morning was suppose to be the “official” end of occupy, a new call out for people to re-occupy Martin Place has taken place for tonight (3 February 2011). Although wet and windy in Sydney, the re-occupation is taking place as I write. There is no evicting an idea whose time has come.

Dale Mills

Coins or Change?

Greece and the European Debt Crisis

If you are used to the long distances in Australia it is hard to imagine how small many European countries are. Since the Second World War several efforts were made to connect the economies in Europe in order to create a common market. This idea was driven by two convictions. First that the disaster of the Third Reich must never happen again and second that only a unified Europe could play an important role within the world economy. The process of unification started as a coalescence in the proper sense of the word. In 1952 Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany founded the European Coal and Steel Community that later on led to the European Union, a highly protectionist area with high subsidies and high borders. Since 2002 many countries of the EU (recently 17) have been sharing the same currency and here things get interesting for us.

During its first years the Euro did quite well and sometimes even was taken into consideration as an alternative to the weak US dollar. Since 2009 the situation changed remarkably. Greece had used the era of cheap money to borrow huge amounts. At some point investors wondered whether Greece was able to pay off the debts in future and came to the obvious conclusion: no! The interest rates increased dramatically and with the beginning of the year 2010 it became clear that Greece was not able to manage the situation on its own. To save the country from the impending bankruptcy the EU provided a \$163 billion bail-out package for the struggling state. It is important to notice that the EU is not the Salvos. The bail-out was connected with far-reaching demands affecting government spending and other domestic policy issues.

Soon afterwards the members of the EU became more and more aware that Greece was not the only country in serious trouble. The real estate bubble in Ireland, Portugal and Spain was about to bust. To calm the investors the EU installed a \$680 billion fund. In November 2010 \$100 billion from this fund was used to bail out Ireland.

In the meantime, tensions between the countries within the Eurozone began to increase. The richer countries, especially Germany, were not willing to pay out the poorer ones.

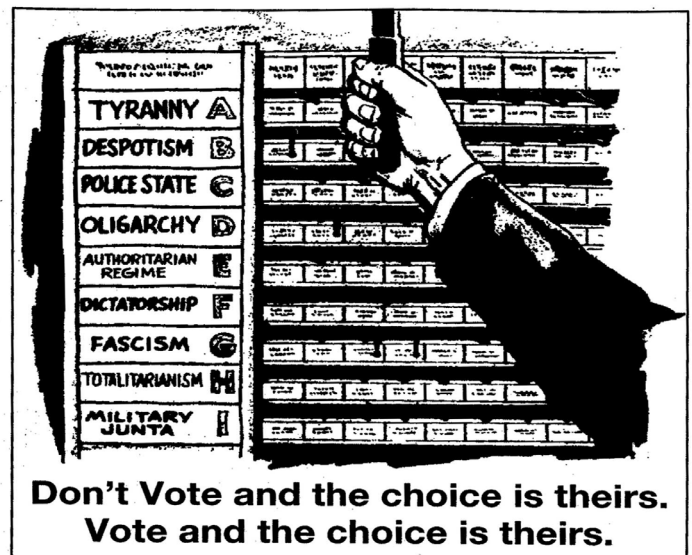
As unemployment rates rose and the governments of several countries applied serious austerity measures people began to express their desperate situation. In mid-May protesters occupied the Puerta del Sol area in Madrid. "We are not just asking for a job. We are asking for a change in the political system," one of the occupants told the BBC. The intention is clear. Most of the demonstrators don't want to change the whole system but to improve it.

In August huge riots occurred nearly simultaneously in the United Kingdom, Greece and Spain. The pictures of burning cars and buildings initially made the crisis palpable

for many people in Europe who were not affected so far. One has to reread the description of a capitalist crisis given in the Communist Manifesto to understand the dimension of the uprisings: "Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed." Obviously the debt crisis has not reached this level so far. In most countries the whole issue is merely a virtual affair. "Crisis? What crisis?" is the thought of many. All institutions of the various states and a huge part of the mass media are heavily occupied to dissimulate the crisis, "to feign not to have what one has" (Baudrillard). The protesters sabotage these efforts by showing the rest of the people "the image of their own future" (Marx). As a result "the conflict is not between different parts of society, it is, at its most radical, the conflict between society and society, between those with no stake in the community and those whose stakes are the highest," noted the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek in an essay for the *London Review of Books*. The riots counteract all attempts to regain the confidence of the people. Without trust the whole currency will collapse like a house of cards. Money is only something of worth as long as we believe in the promise that we are still able to change it into commodities in the future.

The riots lack any utopian dream. The protesters do not say "we can't and we don't want", nor "we can but we don't want". Both would be formulae for a demonstration impassioned about the idea of a better society. The protesters really simple say: "We want but we can't! We want to work, we want to live a decent life, we want to buy something in that shop! But because of the circumstances we are not able to and that's why we loot these shops, now!" The subtext is, of course, that all the others who are still able to live a decent life should not feel too secure. Soon the crisis will seize you, too!

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Debt Crisis *(from page 7)*

It comes as no surprise that officials try to put an end to this wake-up call. And how? With harsh repression! “Court reports began to read like scenes from a Victorian novel — though deportation to Australia would probably have been too good for the “feral rats” in the eyes of the tabloids, whose front pages screamed “Shop A Looter!” (shop is English slang for do in), *The Guardian* reported. Three thousand people were arrested in the course of the riots so far just in the UK. The verdicts are Kafkaesque and show deeply that justice no longer has the ball at its feet. A man who stole a bottle of water was sentenced to six months jail, a person who provided himself with a cup of ice-cream has to serve a prison term of sixteen months. And that’s only the beginning. The police plan to arrest another 9000 protesters after 200,000 hours of CCTV footage are scanned.

Not only governments are busy convincing us that all is under control but also the notorious ratings agencies. The existence of an institution that pretends to be an objective watchdog which is able to calculate how likely a defaulter will pay off his debts, is parody at its purest. According to these agencies Germany will quite likely redeem over \$2,400 billion in debt. All right! It becomes clear that it is not the job of these agencies to bring transparency into the market in order to help to avoid the next bubble. Ratings agencies are not omniscient external institutions, but a part of the bubble. They make out that everything is in good order while things have been going off course for a long time. As a result ratings agencies are powerful but not mighty enough to let the whole system implode by speaking out the truth: “No country is going to pay off its debts in the coming decades. So don’t lend them money any more!” Unfortunately these agencies don’t want to act like suicide bombers and implode with the system that they destroy.

The term European Debt Crisis seems to imply that things are still normal in other parts of the world. As countries are deeply interconnected, the contrary is true. Africa, for example, depends heavily on the Chinese demand for their raw materials. China depends on demand in Europe and the US for their products. The crisis in Europe has a great impact on the Chinese economy, already. The growth rate of the People’s Republic dropped from 10.4% in 2010 to 9.2% in 2011. Compared with countries like Portugal who suffer under a negative growth rate China can’t complain. But China needs a stable growth rate to satisfy its people and avoid riots. Although the country successfully tried to recover from the 2008–09 downturn with a massive stimulus package it is quite unlikely that the Chinese government can afford a similar huge effort in the next few years. The prospects for Africa are even worse. In all probability the crisis will hit the poorest countries the most. “Now the same countries that enforced Africa about proper regulation and debt management have failed to follow their own prescription — and Africa is feeling the pain,” Richard Dowden wrote in the *New Statesman*.

With the economic conditions getting rougher, easy explanations begin to flourish. The rich European countries blame the poor for their laziness. It is a popular stereotype that Greeks drink too much wine, work too little and retire too soon. Greece is a kind of role model for the arrogant attitude towards the countries in the south of the union. Especially Germany tends to have an ambiguous relationship with Greece, as the filmmaker Alexander Kluge pointed out. Since the time of the rediscovery of the classical age, many Germans have been adoring a picture of classical Greece. Every time they went to the country they were disappointed that it is in such a mess.

Friday

Phones \$wimming in the bottom of toilets next to shit

Small round objects



pressing against the

tongues of

13 year old girls”.

Ovaries of a pregnant nun

sprouting wings and flying in the night

-----+

*

Another day in paradise.

X

Some serious efforts took place to metamorphose the country according to the idea they had in mind. It goes without saying that all those attempts failed bitterly.

In generally the conviction is widespread that the countries in trouble have themselves to blame. As PM Gillard put it: "For too many years, European governments have deferred the nation-building productivity-enhancing reforms which Australia has made the foundation of our dynamic and resilient economy." Additionally Ms Gillard called on the leaders to "implement credible medium-term plans to put their budgets on a sustainable footing, because taxpayers rightly expect governments to manage their money prudently and global financial markets demand responsible fiscal management." Or in the words of Marx and Engels: "The bourgeoisie has left no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment'."

As Germany is in a quite powerful position fears are becoming more widespread that a "fourth Reich" is on the way. Though that might be a little bit exaggerated it is true that Berlin has developed a new self-confidence. It is striking how the German government uses its position to implement its own will. For example, Germany was able to enforce an intergovernmental pact between all states of the Eurozone adopting tighter fiscal controls.

"And how does the bourgeois get over the crisis?" Frederick Engels and Karl Marx provide an easy and pellucid answer to that question in the Manifesto: "By paving the way for extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented." Capitalism has created its own term for that phenomenon: double-dip or triple-dip recession. It sounds like the name of some burgers offered by famous fast-food chains. Fast food and a crisis have in common that the problem is not a lack of calories or commerce (in the latter case) but a superabundance.

That's why it is quite ridiculous that some economists were being praised for having predicted the crisis in advance. Unable to admit that downturns occur necessarily in the capitalist system, many so-called experts try to puzzle out at which point things went wrong. "What can we learn from this crisis?" is an often-raised question. Despite coming to different conclusions, all answers serve the same purpose: to convince us that, after slight improvements, capitalism without side effects is possible.

But even if the analysts explore the threat of a sinister event in the future and know how to avoid it they are not able to act according to their own suggestions. A perfect example is the book *The Debt Threat* from 1988. It starts with: "Its [the book's] purpose is not to predict the end of the world, the breakdown of Western civilisation or even the disintegration of the international financial system. Its aim is instead to highlight a problem which began six or seven years ago, is still deteriorating and, unless something is done, will soon cause many books to be written on the impending disintegration of the international financial system, the imminent breakdown of Western civilisation and countless other horrors." Guess who the author of this grim prospect is? Tim Congdon, chief UK economist for Lehman Brothers at the time. Exactly twenty years later this company had to declare

"The law is just. It punishes rich and poor alike for stealing bread."

Well, no. It doesn't even do that.

And if she'd been an Aboriginal teenager???

bankruptcy during the worldwide subprime mortgage crisis. They knew it from the beginning but that was not an advantage. It is necessary that a company strives after the highest profit without taking the risks into consideration.

For decades the trick to overcome a crisis has been to muzzle it with money, and that means with debt. With many states not being able any more to create new debt we will reach the limit of this system soon, hopefully. Even liberal or conservative commentators suspect that, in their terms, we are on the brink of disaster. An article in August in *Time* titled *The End of Europe*, read in part: "It's the end of an era in which the West and the Western ideas of how to create prosperity succeeded. The crisis in Europe and the challenge yet to come on either side of the Atlantic take us into a new whole era. The rules and risks of it are only just becoming clear."

It is not enough to wait and enjoy the self-destructing power of capitalism. If we fail to use the change to create a society without hierarchy, without power structures, without obligation to work, without money, fascism will prosper.

Daniel Bella

Beyond the Darkness:

Myanmar, China and the Geopolitics of Oil

For the first time since its independence from British rule in 1948, it appears some light is starting to shine on Myanmar. On 12 January Thein Sein's nominally democratic government signed a ceasefire with ethnic Karen rebels, and the next day 651 political prisoners were released from state prisons. Diplomatic relations with the West are being restored: US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited in December and UK Foreign Secretary William Hague in January, and as I write this article the EU has rewarded the regime's democratic reforms by lifting visa bans on Myanmar politicians. Local social movements have been fighting for reforms for a long time, but why has Myanmar now decided to come to the table?

Most of Myanmar's life as an independent nation has been under the yoke of a repressive military junta following General Ne Win's 1962 coup d'état, centralising economic power within the state. Dissent was brutally crushed, such as the slaughter of over a hundred students peacefully protesting at Rangoon University in 1962, and the administration isolated itself from the world economy. By the late 80s, China's own brutal repression of political protest landed the two adjacent seats in the Asian pariah-state club. In Myanmar, Beijing saw an ideal partner in boosting bilateral trade ties to achieve regional supremacy, while Rangoon saw a lifeline to revive with their ailing economy.

By 2007 China's bilateral trade with Myanmar had reached \$US1.4 billion annually, with the former providing processed goods like oil, steel and textiles, and the latter raw materials like rubber and wood. Chinese exports to Myanmar increased far quicker than imports, cemented by extensive Chinese infrastructural aid projects and lines of credit. But Myanmar's importance to China clearly extended beyond trade; it was the recipient of hefty loads of military hardware from China (to suppress minority separatist insurgencies) and Chinese training for air force and naval officers. In 1994 Japanese sources revealed that China had completed construction of radar and electronic surveillance facilities on the leased Coco Islands (a group of islands to the south-west of the Myanmar mainland). For China, obtaining Myanmar's alignment was a strategic imperative.

China's unparalleled economic growth over the past twenty years has relied on a huge and growing demand for energy which it cannot satisfy domestically. While 70% of China's energy comes from coal, research now suggests that the majority of easily available and useful coal, the "low-hanging fruit", has already been picked. Coal will become more expensive, so to feed its growth Beijing is looking to diversify its energy portfolio (becoming a world leader in renewable energy), meaning more oil and gas. Aid and investment projects throughout the Middle East and Africa



are part of this diversification strategy. In the wake of new EU sanctions on Iran (the EU consumes around 20% of Iran's oil), China has hired at least two supertankers to suck up this demand shortfall. Their huge foreign exchange reserves give them a commanding position in energy markets, even as oil again pushes up over \$US100 a barrel.

To get that energy to China, you need either a vast network of expensive pipelines or a safe shipping lane. One way is to tank that oil around India, through the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea and up to the Chinese coast. Despite multilateral efforts, the treacherous Strait of Malacca is a notorious hotbed of piracy. A greater threat arises from the growing militarisation of countries surrounding the South China Sea, a shipping lane which carries \$US5 trillion in trade annually.

The US's concern over Chinese economic expansion, as well as their significant holdings of US public debt and capital reserves, underlies Obama's declaration of the 'Asia-Pacific century'. They know that if China is able to secure a significant alternative to its current coal-driven growth it will not only achieve a superior economic position. This fear has prompted a rapid diplomatic shift in priorities from unsustainable oil wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (increasing the flow of oil) to cementing links with ASEAN countries (controlling the flow of oil).

US military aid and diplomacy have taken on a distinctly Sinophobic hue. It has backed the Philippines and Vietnam in territorial disputes and begun joint military exercises in the region. In 2010 a decade-long ban on military assistance to Indonesia was lifted, and in a bid to score more US military aid, the Philippines have begun investigating past human rights abuses. Assistance to Japan and South Korea continues, and the announcement late last year to establish a US military base in Darwin reflects the same fundamental strategy to contain China.

Michael Klare, author of *Blood and Oil*, argues that, "by securing naval dominance of the South China Sea and adjacent waters, the Obama administration evidently aims to acquire the twenty-first century energy equivalent of twentieth-century nuclear blackmail. Push us too far, the policy implies, and we'll bring your economy to its knees by blocking your flow of vital energy supplies."

In response, China has pursued another possible energy corridor, of which Myanmar is the lynchpin. While yet to be completed, it involves shipping the oil or gas as far as Myanmar's Bay of Bengal, and then piping it overland to China's south-western provinces (rather than overland from the Chinese coastline), bypassing Malacca and the South China Sea altogether. China is building a number of pipelines to transport hydrocarbons through Myanmar, to be completed in 2013.

In an attempt to frustrate this, Western governments have reopened diplomatic ties and invited Myanmar back into the international community. Myanmar has also controversially been offered the chair of ASEAN in 2014. However, it must first be proved that Myanmar has changed for the better, before the olive branch can be extended and trade can reopen. Given its stuttering economy and the tensions that has led to Myanmar's current political society, the Myanmar government is only too ready to accommodate these demands.

Whether we should see these transformations as a positive move is a different question altogether. Of course, greater democratic reform and the release of political prisoners is something that should be applauded. In the process Myanmar is situating itself as a pawn on the imperial chessboard, while courting two kings at the same time.

Edward Miller

A Thickshake Saved My Life

Michelle Braunstin

I hardly ever go there. When I do, it's for the free Wi-Fi, to conduct my research. And I'll admit that I buy the occasional caramel thickshake. On that day, whilst queuing for my beverage, I contemplated my thesis - its subject is Late Capitalism, Disease and the Violence of Fast Food. I stared guiltily at the greasy floor. Still, I ordered the drink, paid and excitedly watched the silvered tap extrude its cold, sweet sausage.

"It doesn't count because no-one even knows I'm here!"

I wryly consoled myself, taking my shake from the acned teenager behind the counter.

As my lips descended on the straw, I noticed a man in the middle of the "restaurant" stand feverishly from his seat, reach into his bag and pull out a semi-automatic rifle. He took aim at an obese woman who sat near him, alone, devouring a hamburger. It all happened so quickly; a series of jump cuts, that loosened my guts and put springs in my joints - I leaped into the air and hurled my beverage into the gunman's face. Next, a cleaner tackled him from behind, gouging his thickshake filled eyes, until he screamed and dropped the weapon.

His manifesto was later found on the web. It consisted of a tirade against pickled cucumbers. My face was all over the papers, beneath the headline: "Intellectual Disarms McShooter".

An Introduction to Anarchism

'A bomb in Kabul: Anarchy in the streets!' *'The G20 meeting has seen the violent protest of anarchists smashing windows and setting cars on fire.'* *'The box containing the explosive device has been claimed by an anarchist-insurrectionist group.'* *'Without the government and the police there would be anarchy in the streets!'* *'You're reading Bakunin? Well, don't go around blowing up things, then!'* *'An anarchist conference? Can anarchists actually organise a conference?'*

These are only a few examples of the most popular uses of the word 'anarchy'. Sadly, not many people are aware of the real meanings of this term, its philosophy, history and the multiple aspects of everyday life that are influenced by anarchist theories and practices. Sadly enough, this lack of knowledge is understandable because the meaning of anarchy that government agencies and mass media have conveyed to the masses for the last 150 years was aimed at scaring people while protecting and defending their own privileges. Anarchy does not mean bombs and chaos. Anarchists are not terrorists. Anarchists are not blood-thirsty criminal madmen (or madwomen). So, who are they? Do they still exist? What do they believe in? Are anarchist themes relevant in today's society? What is anarchism?

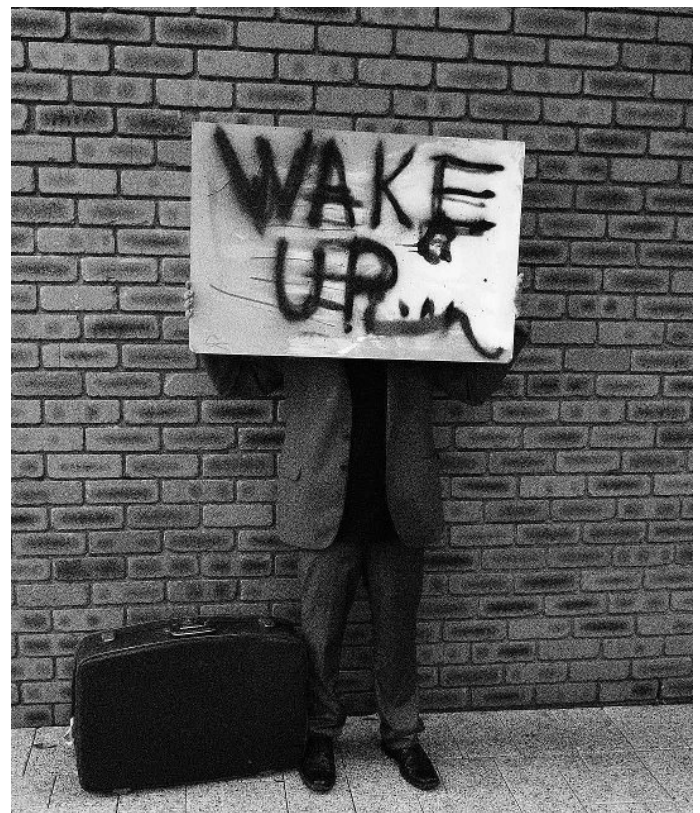
The commitment to protest, to dissent, to sing out of tune, is just one of the many attitudes that can identify an anarchist. Finding a generic definition of anarchism which can be applied across time, lives and places is not easy. Despite some essential characteristics which can be used to frame an anarchist archetype, such as the principle of individual freedom and the rejection of authority, variations among anarchists in regards to society's organisation, the purpose of life, property, law and the dichotomy between means and ends have inevitably affected the history of anarchism both as an ideology and as a political movement.

Firstly, we need to go back to the roots of this word. The idea of anarchy (literally: absence of rulers) has existed since time immemorial. Just like concepts such as 'democracy' and 'liberty', the term anarchism is open to a number of different interpretations. Many scholars have tried to define anarchism by studying both the theories of thinkers and the actions of activists. Many historians have tried to fix a date for the beginning of anarchism. They have found anarchist themes in the philosophies of ancient Greece, in the pages of medieval religious texts and in the religious uprisings and the social rebellions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.

What, then, is anarchism? Anarchism can be understood in political, social, economic and ethical terms. Anarchism can be studied not only as a political or social theory, but also from a psychological perspective. Indeed it is possible to see the manifestation of a sort of Oedipus complex — in the rebellion of a child against his father's authority — as the force that underpins the anarchist rejection of patriarchal rules and impositions from external authorities. Not surprisingly Max Nettlau, one of the first historians to devote themselves to the study of anarchism, traced the idea of revolt against authority back to Lucifer, seen as the 'rebel

... who, in Christian mythology, never yields and keeps on fighting in each individual soul against the good God.' From a strictly etymological point of view, a history of anarchism can be traced back to the first imposition of rule and the consequent denial of it. A history of anarchism may begin, imaginatively, with the replacement of a natural order by the introduction of a social contract aimed at regulating a peaceful coexistence through the limitation of individual freedoms. Thus, the concept of anarchism implies two specific human tendencies: the act of dissenting and the desire for freedom. However, this specific interpretation does not explain why anarchism, both as a doctrine and as a political movement, came to life only at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The causes can be found in the European historical process of secularisation, in the system of economic and political centralisation, and finally in the Industrial and the French Revolutions. It was only after the spread of the Enlightenment and the rise of a modern labour movement that the tendency to rebel found its place and its ability to express itself within the political arena.

A clear definition of anarchism requires the analysis of several concepts such as the utopian dream, the Marxist critique of utopianism and anarchism, the development of socialism, both as an ideology and as a political movement, the rise of the labour movement, the philosophy of individualism, the idea of revolution, the relationship between means and ends, the rejection of God and spiritual anarchism. Several studies on these topics demonstrate that even within anarchism there are multiple shades of grey that essentially hide different approaches to the meaning of life. As Wakeman wisely pointed out, 'There are as many variations of Anarchism as there are Anarchists.' The complexity of defining and interpreting





anarchism reveals the anti-dogmatic nature of anarchism. This contradictory and, at the same time, 'benevolent' aspect of anarchism does not mean that any individual choice is worthy as long as the person that makes it labels it somehow as being anarchist. The key principles of individual freedom and rejection of authority prevent anyone, especially an anarchist, from imposing a pre-set definition, values or criteria to define anarchism and what an anarchist should be. The lack of a clear definition and interpretation, which is common to other political phenomena, challenges dominant Western theories based on alleged objectivity, and highlights the complexity of being an anti-conformist even within the anarchist movement.

The essence of anarchism needs to be sought not only from a semantic perspective, in the act of dissent from authority, but also in the equally fundamental concept of individuality and of freedom to participate in the management of the res publica. The principle of individual freedom is pivotal to the history of anarchism. Especially for communist-anarchists, freedom and equality are key concepts: it is not possible to have one without the other, and both find full realisation only when they are achieved together. Moreover, the freedom and/or right to participate imply the equally important concept of responsibility, and thus the anarchist refusal to delegate. This issue played an important role in the debate between anarchists and legalistic socialists at the end of the nineteenth century.

For the purpose of this article, I will briefly outline what anarchists stand for and oppose. Anarchists oppose the actual social order maintained by the use of violence and within which human beings fight against each other, exploit and oppress one another. Anarchists aim at achieving the constitution of a new society within which everyone can find complete freedom, satisfaction of needs, and realisation of desires. A society based on solidarity,

cooperation and love with every human being. A society that allows full development of intellectual and emotional potentials. A society of free human beings. Yet nobody can say exactly what this society will look like. Especially if anarchist, nobody can impose their own ideas on other people. The best way to discover it is freedom: freedom to experiment, complete freedom without any other limit but one's responsibility towards other people's freedom.

There are differences among anarchists. Some anarchists call themselves individualist, some other call themselves communists. Anarchists have different ideas on how to achieve this new society. It's the dichotomy of means and ends that has marked the history of anarchist movements.

Some anarchists are organisational, some other are anti-organisational. Some anarchists focus on workers, and are involved with revolutionary syndicalism. Some anarchists are more concerned with environmental issues, while some are involved with animal rights. Some anarchists are homosexual, some anarchists are Muslim, some are refugees, and some are indigenous people. Anarchists support struggles against the actual social order, based on hierarchies, relationships of power, use of violence, economic, cultural and social discrimination. Sometimes it is difficult to see why all these kinds of anarchists cannot cooperate if the end is the same and the means are not contradictory.

There are some anarchists who consider radical change through violent deeds as the way to destroy capitalism and oppression. There other anarchists who would rather rely on the power of ideas and education. Ideas are bulletproof. Yet the choice depends on the historical and geographical context. Today, in a city such as Perth, I believe that ideas are more effective than smashing windows. Yet, even if we live in a privileged city like Perth, we can't but notice that there is something wrong in our world, isn't there? Let's look around: poverty, misery, discrimination, violations of human rights are not images on TV. They are all around us. Abuse of power, authority, mind control, surveillance, censorship of independent thought and dissent: we experience them every day. We live in fear. And that's why we submit our will to government agencies. That's why we delegate our responsibility to higher authorities and we let them govern us. To be an anarchist means to oppose being governed. To paraphrase Proudhon, to be governed means to be checked, spied on, supervised, ruled, legislated, regulated, labelled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, valued, measured, seized, censored, commanded, and ordered by those who do not have neither the virtue nor the knowledge to do it. Being governed means to be taxed, trained, blackmailed, exploited, monopolised, extorted, squeezed, hoaxed, and robbed. Being governed means that disobedience and dissent lead to repression, discrimination, detention, deportation, to be ridiculed, attacked, disarmed, cuffed, jailed, shot, judged, condemned, sacrificed, sold, betrayed, stigmatised and dishonoured. All of this in the name of public security, public interest and reason of state.

(to be continued ...)

Dr Spook

The dead women of Juarez

I relate to the dead women of Juarez.
Every scar a colonial moment.
Privilege cut into our skin.
And every fuck just a fuck.
The history distant,
imagined and dull.
But her eggs aren't well done
and the inheritance won't come
'til she's at least twenty five.
Sulking on the golden teet.
Polite conversation before
the big black man
with a gentle face
and nice smile
slips it in her arse.
And meanwhile
another face,
is buried
beneath men,
violence
and dirt.
Her stomach cut.
tear-ducts fucked,
pissing blood and lime.
A sour taste.
Hidden beneath
the discarded fragments
of industry.
But there is only silence
in illuminated text.
And it is strange
to not have TV.
No room for dessert.
Throat cut,
eyes to god.
Laying in a ditch
while her mother sleeps,
unaware,
dreaming Mexican dreams.
And perhaps there is no difference
between the white woman
disturbing my meal
with inane chatter
and the dead girl
just south of the US border.
But I relate to the dead women of Juarez.
My bones aching with guilt
and my beer getting warm.

Hierarchy and Nature

Systematic oppression has exerted itself from the founding of nations to the maintenance of them as surely my reader is well aware. The incarceration is endured daily, passively engineered to suit the needs of those in power. Whether that power proliferates from monetary control, brutality or psychological submissiveness is rather trivial.

Hierarchy, characterized by domination and exploitation, is a structure that requires those below to engage in competitive and oppressive interrelationships. Hitherto it has never been more prevalent than in present society.

To argue that there are hierarchies in nature is to argue that our understanding of ecology isn't based upon mutualism or cooperation but rather competition and instability. It is not a misunderstanding of hierarchy (although it can often be) but of nature, the natural way of life that asserts itself freely and spontaneously without force.

The dynamic differentiation and increasing diversity are the outcomes of such asserted freedoms in nature. These tenets, in turn, allow balance and harmony to be achieved without the descent into the use of external force, and arguably where human society has failed.

The stability of an ecological society is at its most harmonious when diversity and differentiation are rich; hitherto variety and complexity become intangible, as the balanced ecological society exacerbates no signs of oppression.

Therefore power structures in nature would serve to bring about its demise, the ecological society has a predilection to preserve its harmony and balance, such that it produces a self-regulated, spontaneous notion of order.

This order is realized due to the mutually supportive interrelationships compelled to each ecological being, reinforcing that all ecological relationships in nature are interdependent.

The interdependent relationships in nature perpetuate the assertion of the natural order; devoid of exploitation and domination, each ecological relationship forms an essence of mutualism.

Religion, that superior province of the 'civilized' which separated man from nature, engineered the beginnings of absolutism. We are depicted as god's deputies, caring for his most 'important creations', conceding our faith to instrumental value, the value for which something can be utilized for human exploit. Expounding intrinsic value (every living thing has value in itself) in this way promotes the discourse that hierarchies exist in nature, due to some 'creations' being worth more or less than their fellows. This ill-informed despotic dominion refers to the non-human world as utterly inferior to that of human, rendering the human understanding of ecological processes narrow and limited.

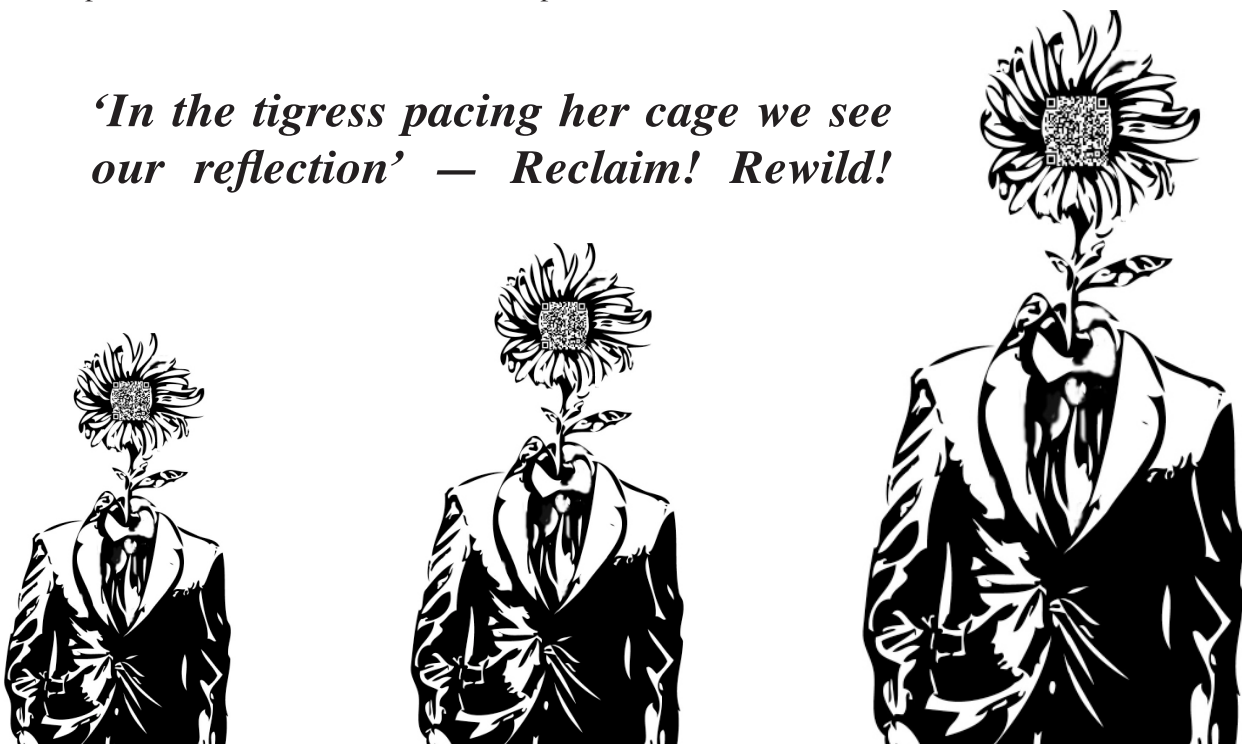
For something to be exploitative, it is necessary that its subjects be dominated by hierarchical power. We are compelled to view a world without humans as a mindless society, 'kill or be killed'. The existence of hierarchy in nature was constructed to serve the purpose of the individual and nothing else, it was established to accommodate for the bourgeois appetites of affluence, control and dominance whose ethics and ideas reverberate through the broader society.

These ethical ideals and presupposed emotional drivers did not exist until the advent of the 'civilized', from which all other cultures and existences are measured inferior.

The plight exists for a counter dialogue; a rewilding of mental conditioning that discovers and perpetuates novel praxis based upon non-hierarchical patterns of existence.

Dylan Lehmann

*'In the tigress pacing her cage we see
our reflection' — Reclaim! Rewild!*



Me and Mine

The concept of 'private property' is of utmost importance within late capitalism, private property being all that one possesses for oneself, be it concrete or abstract. So, not only the books on my bookshelf are my property, but also my thoughts, ideas and concepts are 'mine'. According to most, it is clear that my private property can only be mine, if it is not someone else's at the same time. Therefore it is generally thought that people need some kind of protection of their property. In our society, the state provides us with this protection by means of 'property rights' and, correlatively, punishment if one violates these rights. The philosophical foundation for this statism can be found in many different theories. I will first discuss two of these theories here, after which I will explain why property is not possible as long as there is a state.

The necessity of a state

Neo-Kantian philosopher Anna Stiltz states in *Liberal Loyalty* that the state is a necessary institution to provide us with protection. She bases this view on the argument of justice. According to Stiltz, all persons have a duty of justice. This so-called duty of justice is a general, non-voluntary duty to be just that all people have towards all other people. Stiltz states that if this duty of justice were to be based on innate moral values only, one would be dependent on other people's values. This would mean there would be no freedom. Or, as Stiltz puts it herself: 'I argue in this chapter that equal freedom cannot be defined or made determinate without state authority, and therefore that justice, when rightly understood, must commit us to accepting the authority of legitimate states.' To establish freedom, a state is necessary to create rules to perform justice. Practically, this means that there is no possibility of having a concept of freedom; as long as there is no state because what freedom is can only be determined by means of arbitration. With the case of property rights Stiltz would claim, like other Kantians, that property is an essential aspect of freedom. To secure my freedom and thus also my property, the state would have to give me the right to property and at the same time enforce a law which punishes anyone who violates my property (e.g. by stealing or destroying it).

Stiltz's view is a lot like Jeremy Waldron's theory on justice. In his article *Special Ties and Natural Duties* Waldron explains his idea of obligation to obey a state based on Rawls's justice theory. Like Stiltz and Rawls, Waldron uses the idea of the duty of justice as a natural duty to show that people have an obligation to obey the state.

Also, Waldron states that people's choices and values are dependent on other people's choices and values because they differ for each individual. This argument roughly follows the same line as Stiltz's argument I mentioned earlier. According to Waldron this difference in choices and values results in disagreement, which leads to a coordination problem, and can only be solved by our compliance with some just and effective organisation. In short, both Jeremy Waldron and Anna Stiltz express the idea that people have a natural duty of justice. To establish freedom people must obey just institutions, in this case the state. The state gives us certain 'rights' (for instance, property rights) and, correlatively, creates laws concerning these rights. Since property is an element of freedom, the state is necessary to secure an individual's private property.

The anarchist response

Let us now take a closer look at this property, which is protected by property rights and laws. As I said before, property, in the sense that something is truly mine, is not possible as long as there is a state. Max Stirner, a German philosopher who is generally seen as one of the founders of individualist anarchism argued this case. In *The Ego and Its Own*, his best-known work, Stirner rejects everything that places itself above the individual, whether it is external force, religion, beliefs or ideas, because it limits oneself. Obviously, an institution like the state is one of these limiting things that places itself above the individual, therefore he rejects the state. This is hardly an uncommon anarchist idea, but why now, is having 'private property' impossible as long as there is a state?

The concept of 'property' lies at the heart of Stirner's anarchist critique. He essentially defines property as I did earlier — all that one possesses for oneself, be it concrete or abstract, but uses it in a much broader sense, and most importantly, states that it is one of the most important assets of the ego. People in their lifetimes go through different 'stages' of being. First, there is the realist stage, the years of childhood. In this stage people are dependent on external forces and laws. When children learn to use reason, they can overcome these external forces. This stage is called the idealist phase. In this phase, however, people are still led by forces; not external force, but now internal (that is, their own rules of thinking, such as the concept of 'truth'). The final, and third phase is the one of the ego. In this egoist phase, people put their own interests before all else. This dialectical development of the individual (Stirner was a student of G.W.F. Hegel) can be seen as analogous with human history in general: first, there is the realist, or materialist age (pre-Christian world), then the idealist age ('modern' society), and lastly the egoist age (the future).

ALMOST THE NEWS...

The ANZ Bank has announced that one thousand workers will be sacked to save the bank \$50 million a year in wage costs. The executive who made the decision will be given a \$50 million bonus.

At the Church of the Completely Incoherent, Pastor Margaret Court reminded the congregation of the importance of the teachings of St Paul. 'Especially note his preaching that it is an abomination for a woman to speak in church'.

President Bashar al-Assad of Syria has announced an amnesty for demonstrators. 'There will be a general pardon and then they'll all be hunted down like dogs,' he said.

We can see that in modern society, much like in our own 'idealist' phase in our lives, we're still slaves of certain (not external, but internal) forces. Stirner calls these forces religion, morality and, for instance, general concepts such as 'humanity'.

Here we come upon the concept of private property. According to Stirner, one must make everything or 'the whole world' one's own private property. This is based on the idea that as long as I do not own things (note that Stirner here means both conceptual and actual 'things'), they will own me. When I make myself the owner of everything, I can decide what I want to do with it. My thoughts will be based on my own perception, and not on someone else's. I will be able to treat the world as I please, instead of letting myself be led by abstract conceptions that have nothing to do with me. I am not subject to humanity, but humanity is one of the things that belong to me. This is not as absurd as it may sound. We very often say that being human is one of my 'properties' or characteristics, just as 'woman', 'artist' or 'student' can be one of my properties.

Now, according to Stirner, property should never be given to me by someone or something else, such as a God who gives me truth or a state which gives me a right, but always taken by myself, because when something is given, it can be taken away too: you're never truly 'owner' of the given thing. Is it not true that my property is only protected because the state agrees with the fact that it is my property? After all, the state gives me a right to property. But if this right to property is given to me it can just as easily be taken away from me. This would mean that it is not my property at all, but merely something I borrowed. The property belongs to the state.

Egoist anarchism in practice

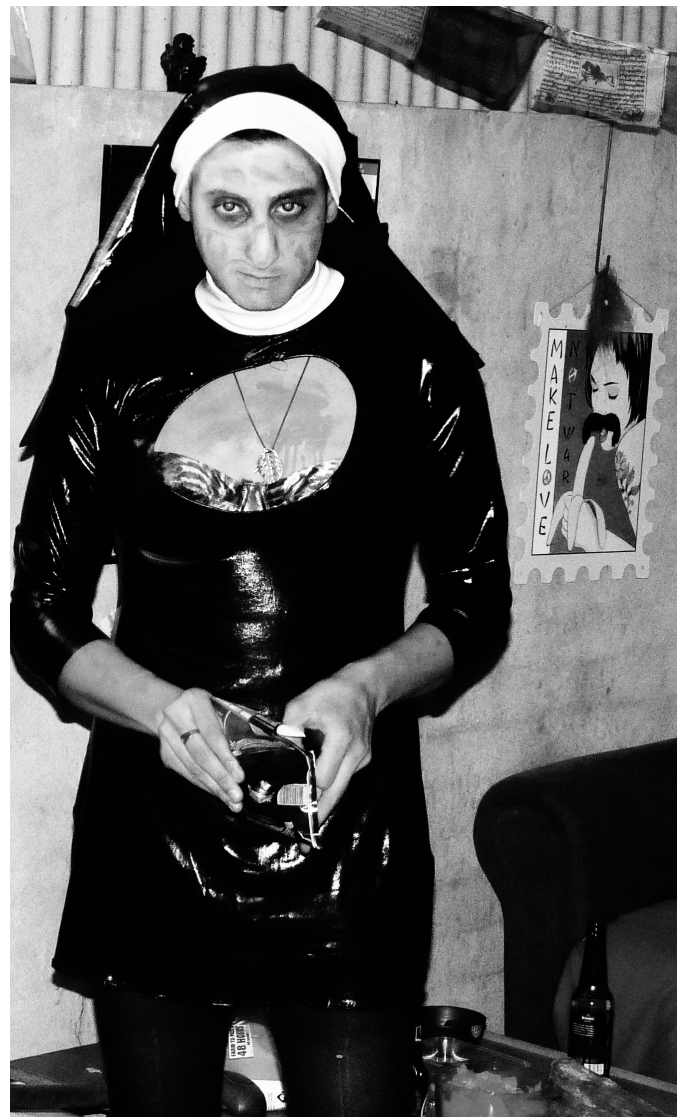
Even if we accept this individualist anarchist view and therefore reject both Waldron's and Stiltz's theories, Stirner's egoist anarchism does not seem entirely satisfying either. There are problems with Stirner's view. Firstly, his theories seem inconsistent at some points. On the one hand Stirner states that people should not be led by abstract conceptions such as 'humanity', but on the other hand speaks of abstract concepts such as 'rights' himself, which would make his view highly self-defeating. Secondly, and most importantly, it is very unclear how Stirner envisions this egoism in a practical sense. Though some would say individualist anarchism leads to a highly developed form of market liberalism, or a system of free exchange without any interference of a state (some may even call them anarcho-capitalists), Stirner himself does not make any claims about this.

How, for instance, should we see private property if every individual treats 'the whole world' as their own? One of the reasons on which Stirner bases his rejection of property provided by the state is that the state gives rights, which can be taken away. So property is given by the state and can be taken away by it too. If my property is only my property until someone takes it away, do we not fall back into the situation Stirner rejects? One might ask therefore how in Stirner's theory the relationship between individuals is different from the relationship between people and the state.

To reiterate, statist theories, such as Waldron's and Stiltz's, express the idea that a state is necessary to protect my property. Both Stiltz and Waldron base this view on the concept of the duty of justice as a natural duty, which needs arbitration among competing conceptions of justice held by individuals. According to Waldron and Stiltz, this arbitration can only be 'coordinated' by the state. Since private property is a part of freedom, and freedom can only be determined and established with arbitration of the state, a state is necessary to protect private property. Anarchist philosopher Max Stirner, however, states that one needs to take 'ownership', and should never rely on given 'rights', because they can easily be taken away and are therefore never truly one's 'own property'.

While some questions on how to treat private property in a practical way remain unanswered by Stirner, he succinctly identifies some of the contradictions of statism, namely the idea of a state being necessary to protect my property, an idea built on false conceptions of both 'property' and 'rights'. Firstly, rights should not be given to me but taken by me, to have any meaning at all. Secondly, property that is only acknowledged due to these given rights can be taken away from me in an instant, and is therefore not truly mine. Therefore, as long as there is a state, any state, it is impossible for anyone to truly have private property.

Hester van Zelst



The Revolution Is My Boyfriend

Decadent, Defiant, Delirious, Dangerous but ultimately Fabulous, Queer Anarchism is the study and practice of sexual and gender subversion. Although the idea of turning our sexuality and bodies into political statements can seem a little dry, we feel that this is the only option when faced with a violent normality. Normality is a social construct, created by the State, Church and Capital and reproduced by almost everyone. This constructed normality is defined and re-defined in an effort to restrict, regulate and direct us into a homogeneous troop, controllable by authorities. Infinitely differentiated individuals are coerced into a tiny number of categories: Man, Woman, Heterosexual and perhaps Homosexual. Special privileges meet those who conform to the roles, temperament and status appropriate to their assigned categories while violence and oppression wait for anyone who falls outside of them or dares to be true. These categories are phantoms, designed to haunt, polarise, homogenise and standardise us so that we can be divided into marketing niches and controllable segments. It is much easier to market products (including religion) to a homogeneous society, much easier to structure power around patriarchy and much more convenient for social control if people are split into Men and Women and are mostly heterosexual.

However, just as almost everyone reproduces this normality, almost everyone struggles against it, causing ever changing definitions of 'normal' that institutions struggle to keep up and mould to their agendas. Queer Anarchism then, is politics for anyone who despises the categorisation of people and recognises the role of state and capital in perpetuating these restrictions. Queer Anarchism isn't just for men who suck cock, women who like cunts and people who deviate from their assigned genders, it is for anyone who wishes to be uncontrollable and attack some of the fundamental pillars of power that support institutional hierarchy. From this point of view the struggle that faces us is to subvert and disrupt this normality; to explode the compulsory heterosexual nuclear family and watch the government burn with it. Fighting normality means not being silent, it means being proud, it means experimentation, it means bashing back, it means mutual aid amongst queers, it means solidarity with all oppressed people, it means living as your fabulous self without fear. In the words of Judith Butler 'the purpose [of queer theory] is to trace the ways in which gender fables establish and circulate the misnomer of natural facts.'

We are inspired by homos like Jean Genet, who after being conscripted into the French Foreign Legion turned his entire regiment gay and received a dis-honourable discharge; trans* people like Raewyn Connell who analyses the intersections of masculinity, race and class; punk rockers like Kathleen Hanna who attack the male domination of radical movements and 'sub-cultures' and feminists like Kate Millet and Andrea Smith who put the freedom of women (and everyone) above participation and voting in bourgeois elections and institutions.

Queer Anarchists differ from authoritarian socialists, liberals and other statists who seek equality before

the law for homosexual people. Anarchists know that any hierarchical structure, any government, relies on a controllable mass of people and will perpetuate patriarchy and hetero-normativity to render us obedient worker-consumer-soldier-zombies. It seems like such a waste of time to devote so much energy and fight into begging governments, churches and heterosexual people to allow gay people to marry each other. There seems to be so many more pressing concerns affecting the everyday lives of most queer and trans* people. We are getting bashed on the streets, bullied in schools, kicked out of clubs and churches, fired from our jobs and denied healthcare, yet the gay rights movement, dominated by white bourgeois cis-men, doesn't seem to care about the issues affecting less privileged queer and trans* people as long as they can change the state's definition of normal to include themselves.

Even though this Queer analysis of sexual and gender dynamics seems so fundamental to the operation of power and hierarchy in society and therefore so fundamental to Anarchism and that queer and trans* people are a part of anarchist circles, time and time again they find the same oppressive normality and power structures being produced within Anarchist groups, just as in hetero-society. Our intention as queers is not to be separatist, however exclusion and defensiveness from other anarchists leaves us with no other option but to split and form autonomous groups. Even so, we demand more than just inclusion for ourselves: as anarchists we must consider the intersections of oppressions and aim to privilege those who experience oppression most substantially. As experienced by queers and others, many 'anarchist' circles are dominated by the white-supremacist-hetero-patriarchal instrumentality that perpetuates our oppression and the oppression of others.

Being an anarchist isn't about being comfortable, especially when so many are uncomfortable and mention unsafe. If you feel comfortable and safe in hetero-anarchist spaces then you are feeling comfortable with the demographic violence of the church and state. We want you to feel uncomfortable about reproducing their violence, because that's what you're doing.

And to heterosexual 'allies': we don't want equality with you, so don't fight for our equality. We want freedom without normalisation, repression or access to special privileges. Queers have seen what happened in the US with civil rights, now all these white people are running around pretending they live in a post-racist society all colour blind and shit. Well as soon as heteros allow homos to get married, nothing will change, the same homophobia and transphobia will exist, only all the 'allies' will be happy and pat themselves on the back for living in a post-homophobic society. Don't ally yourself with us, join us. Fuck equal rights, fight for freedom. Make the revolution your lover.

Conformity is counter-revolutionary. Heterosexuality is counter-revolutionary.

Monty and Lian, a couple of zombie Dingoes

Revelations Smile

Yeah Ya Rite
Smile

It was him & me
Following U & her
Following Jasper Johns
Following the
Eye've play-st Plack-ee-\$
2 place a
nee-dell
2 push a button
Cus me knot fee-bell Me just goin
"Well YA NO!"

Meezer Hear
War-kin Murry Streets bleedin
bust up beer cans
of
Cock & Doll
Producing rifts like...
Good Times
Bet ya tight
Bet ya beanza s l o w l y
Basted in well woven white
nigger box voices full of frite
humming round leather coated
stamens in cushioned glass
& that
was only shop
Numbur 3 2 1.

So....YA
making any cents 2-her ?

Well... Yea Kind-da
She can bee used in
conjunction with
any of me home loan apps
But know
i'm
being lead buy
Dees Bone-e- Fied Phonza
Expressing
Honed Out Tones
2 Durr HammerShops
Uh-Com-Pan-eeing
modern Tee Fords
along lies
that r
never able to meet the requirements
Sow?
as
a needle pulling thread creates
an unusual imagination
Cascading... Tumbling
upon rocks where Mist clings 2 our
moss that embraces

Franklin River Boat Jurn-kees along edges
where fear flowers
showering arrows
each tipped with revelations
smile emerging
outta warm cuddles
dat "Pop!"
Pa pa rat zee Style
while eye'm mad as a cut snake all
air un now
tasting like a dried up Bill-a- Bong reflecting the dance
of those lost shiny gotta ave it smiles from
Miles
&
Miles of Salt .

A certainty within her
smile twitches scampering across
her Picasso nails declaring
Hear Eye Am A
satisfied morning
yawn
squeezing threw distant thunder clouds
silhouetting the foresight

that's

the light house on rotto seen from floreat beach
upside down
yoga breathing waterways stillness
along country
roads that he & now eye line with
an excellent world service, abc, sbs version
of a know
it all trust this
our commentary
there is rack un ruin ahead.

2 witch u
darling
re-position
and declare
with a tug boat smile that reminds me
Secretly...

**I will always be
your... wanker.**

- SOS

An Open Letter in Defence of Humanism

This letter is written in response to the increasing moralism that often overwhelms any real political objective within the activist community. It is a defence of humanism — that system of thought that acknowledges the essential complexity of the human experience.

It is necessary to understand and respect that every human being has the freedom and responsibility to choose the path of their existence and this choice is inherent to human existence no matter the circumstance.

Increasingly it has become acceptable to justify political points of view by resorting to a moral stance. However, to prescribe to an overriding morality of any kind and in doing so to disregard the complexity of any human situation is to back yourself into a corner where you lose your sense of humanity and are in danger of behaving exactly the same as those you condemn.

Very often the response of people to a situation is the product of the very thing they oppose. There is the state institutionalisation of violence as exemplified by modern warfare (the distancing of the perpetrators from the consequence of their actions), the incarceration of people seeking asylum and even the barbaric treatment of animals in factory farming. Then there is the obsession with legislating any potential risk out of existence — the obsession with avoiding liability and therefore responsibility. To adhere rigidly to a moral judgment that is considered correct within a particular political viewpoint and therefore to somehow claim the moral high ground is a product of exactly the same mentality which allows all of this to occur and be justified. It is to presume a monopoly on 'rightness'.

This perpetuation of moralism and ultimately statism is all too prevalent in contemporary activism. Often the very activists who demonstrate against the actions of the state are the first to call upon the state to act when their own morality is threatened.

Furthermore, many activists who we admire greatly for their commitment and dedication continually sabotage their own causes by proclaiming moralistic judgments which effectively exclude other's support. As an example, to try to gain moral superiority by contrasting the Australian public's response to the treatment of cattle exported to Indonesia with a perceived lack of concern over the treatment of people in detention centres is ludicrous and self-defeating. It is not an either-or situation. Concern for one situation does not preclude a concern for the other and to morally condemn people for their response does not gain their support for another unrelated cause.

This moralism even reared its head during the recent Occupy protests in the USA. While some Occupy camps effectively became shelters for the homeless it was reported that some protest camps expelled homeless people due to their lack of hygiene and disregard for the political correctness of the protesters. In fact a few Occupy encampments even drafted declarations to exclude the down-and-outs. These declarations essentially stated that, 'If you are homeless in New York, there are plenty of places to be homeless. Go there. Feel free to visit, maybe even eat some free food, occasionally. But don't stay here. Don't cause trouble. This society gives us enough trouble.' While it may be practical to at times exclude people from situations due to their actions, to condemn an entire group of people based on a perceived challenge to your morality is not only exclusive but does nothing more than perpetuate the ideology of the system that you are attempting to oppose.

We have often wondered why within the activist community when people so often talk about gaining the support of the wider community that they behave in such an exclusive manner — effectively alienating many people who would support their causes. We can only conclude that on some level there is a desire to maintain their status as a 'moral minority' and therefore their superior 'rightness'.





Self-determination is essential both individually and collectively. We cannot solve another's problems by imposing our own judgment upon them. The nature of any problem is that it requires a process that can only be engaged by those involved. Although others can provide support and can try to change and oppose systems that create suffering and injustice.

Finally, as stated earlier, we have the utmost respect for those individuals who sacrifice so much for the causes they are committed to. This letter is not directed to any one activist, group or movement. It is, however, an honest observation and critique of the moralism which so often undermines the intentions of movements of justice and freedom.

We welcome response and discussion.

For absolute freedom and absolute responsibility,

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Neither do we subscribe to this so called feeling of 'guilt' — responsibility for things that we did not directly do and the accompanying notion of 'privilege' that both seems to imply a greater choice and greater responsibility for events that we have no control over. We did not choose to be born into the circumstances we were born into anymore than anyone else in the world did. People in the most dire circumstances still have, in a sense, their freedom to choose and would more than likely resent being told that they didn't and that all of us are restricted by our circumstance. This does not condone or justify the suffering or imprisonment of anyone. But why do people who are concerned about injustice and suffering feel it necessary to make pronouncements about situations they have no experience of and to take so-called 'responsibility' for actions taken by people possibly of the same skin colour or from countries that they reside in? Isn't this some sort of weird racism or nationalism?

Turning others into victims robs them of their autonomy. Turning yourself into a victim by claiming you are responsible for something you did not do robs you both of your autonomy and any real responsibility.

**YOU DONT HAVE TO
FUCK PEOPLE OVER**



TO SURVIVE

Uncles of a Lost Girl

Nineteen, I flew to New York
Like the oceans below tears belted the rocks of my face
eroding me
I wandered the villages East and West:
Broadway a vivisection
Times Square grotesque.
In the museums my tracks formed a mandala as I made my way from painting
to painting
and back in meditation,
beginning to see something so sad, so ugly inside
This I packed away into a hard shell case and holed up in Brooklyn,
nullified by fat joints, cans of Rolling Rock and games of chess

Exchanging my dwindling pocketful
of call centre dollars for francs, I
met my twin *cousines* in Paris:
I resembled one more than she,
her own sister.
Both dressed me, a mannequin in the latest designs
and when I poked my head like a periscope through the sun roof of their Citroën,
birthed by the Arc de Triomphe,
the wind whipped my newborn skin.
At his apartment, Great Uncle Romain showed me his Red Army medals;
the dried blood of Spanish Fascists and Anarchists had formed liver spots on his hands;
strange snacks
accompanied the cognac;
and when he asked me if I was a Communist or an Anarchist
I replied '*oui*'.

I lunched daily at Uncle Lucien's Algerian restaurant,
told them I wanted to visit De Beauvoir's, Sartre's and Morrison's graves
so I could weep
and take photographs -
Aunt Martine's pencilled brows shot up as she refilled her glass,
Gauloise smouldering between her lips

On my twentieth birthday I returned like
Saturn to Melbourne to the self-styled university
intelligentsia (cask wine, speed and dope,
poetics and politics),

more lost than on the streets of enormous, foreign cities.
For a time I changed my image and my name,
yet beneath still lay the rocky outcrop.

The kindest uncle of all, loved my stories of fighting VSU
and my shaved head.
But he lined his desk drawers with tacky golds and ripe reds -
an arsenal of chocolate discovered by my father who accused him of
diabetic suicide.
I heard the news
and sat on the bottom step at my mother's and wept
Uncle Émile was gone,
buried by his sons who shovelled earth on his grave like soldiers
And I watched, eroding still

- **Michelle Braunstein**





*little screams
little screams
we have a history
when we said no
when we let go
of their metal bar fears*

*little glimpse
little glimpse
of a community
we left footprints
golden footprints
we have our glorious years*

*we danced in Paris
brothers and sisters our name
made love on La Ramblas
and we became
fucked and federated*

*we stood up at the Kronstadt
stood up in Prague
stand up in this moment
stand up in this bar*

*on top of that hill i see
on top of that hill i see
on top of that hill i see
glorious Anarchy*